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Housekeepers' Chat Monday, July 22, 1929.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "When We Go Picnicking." Information from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A. Recipe for Mexican Salad from Bureau of Home Economics.

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"Will you do me a favor?" I asked my Next-Door Neighbor.

"That depends," said my Neighbor, "on your definition of a favor."

"Will you please," I continued, "tell me why it is that your extemporaneous picnics are always so successful? It seems to me that you are always prepared for a picnic. Take yesterday, for instance. When your relatives drove in from the city, and it was too pleasant to eat indoors, you suggested a dinner down by the river. Weren't you the least bit flustered, at having such a horde of relatives come in unexpectedly?"

"Not a bit," said my Neighbor. "Why should I be? Don't I have a model picnic basket, always fully equipped with the necessary paraphernalia?"

"Tell me about it," I said. "What do you keep in your model picnic basket?"

"Salt and pepper, sugar, paper napkins, a can opener, a bottle opener, a corkscrew, holders for hot pan handles, cups and plates, knives, forks, and spoons, a bread knife and a paring knife, long-handled stirring spoons, long-handled forks, and a long-handled broiler.

"Cups and plates may be either aluminum or tin, as may also the knives, forks, spoons, and a couple of broad surface sauce pans, with tight covers. If the sauce pans have broad surfaces, they will heat more quickly, and are not so likely to topple over into the fire. Heavy fiber, or thin wooden plates are also good, and can be thrown away, leaving no dishes to wash.

"Other articles in my picnic basket are newspapers, and a large bag for soiled dishes. The best thing for soiled dishes -- those to be brought home unwashed -- is a cheap, heavy paper shopping bag. Have I forgotten anything? Forgot the matches, as usual.

"Well, Aunt Sammy, those are the things I keep in my model picnic basket, all the time. When Jim comes home tired and cranky, and swears it's too hot to eat, it takes but a jiffy to fill the basket with the necessary eatables, pack the basket and the family in the car, and strike out for the wide open spaces.

"One time," continued my Neighbor, "when I was young and enthusiastic, I made a list of foods which are appropriate for meals out of doors. I divided picnic foods into nine classes. Shall I show you the picnic card, from my recipe file?"

My Neighbor hunted up her card, and read to me her suggestions for the picnic basket. I wrote them down -- perhaps you'd like to write them too.

First, Meats. Under this heading we have meats to be cooked, and meats already cooked. The meats to be cooked include bacon and eggs (the eggs may be boiled, fried, or scrambled), meat balls, chipped beef, frankfurters, chops, and steak. The cooked meats include tongue, ham, fried chicken, and cold roasts.

Second, Appetizers. Appetizers include pickles, dill, sweet, sour, or mustard; olives; chili sauce; mustard; and salad dressing--usually mayonnaise.

Third, Bread. This may be rolls, nut bread, raisin bread, sandwiches, or crackers. As a rule, one kind of bread is enough.

Fourth, Salads. Appropriate picnic salads are chicken, potato, cabbage, tuna fish or salmon, and lettuce and tomato. Lettuce and tomato salad may be prepared at the picnic grounds. If you take lettuce, wash it before you leave home, and pack it in a tin bucket, or box.

Fifth, Prepared Foods, the most common being potato chips, scalloped potatoes, and baked beans. In a heavy baking dish, or casserole, these foods hold their heat for a long time.

Sixth, Fresh Vegetables, which can be packed in the basket and cooked over the picnic fire. Potatoes, to bake or boil, fresh roasting ears, even green peas, are vegetable possibilities.

Seventh, Fruit -- grapes, oranges, bananas, cantaloupes, watermelon, peaches, plums, pears -- whatever is available.

Eighth, something sweet -- cake or cookies, gingerbread, or doughnuts. If you take cake, be sure it's an easy one to handle; stick frostings are out of place at a picnic.

Ninth, something to drink. Good cold drinks include lemonade, orangeade, grape juice, and ginger ale. The best way to carry ginger ale a long distance is to put the bottles in a bucket, place pieces of ice around the bottles, and wrap the bucket in newspapers. And don't forget milk for the children. It too can be carried bottled in ice, or chilled and put in a thermos bottle.

Those are all the types of food my Neighbor mentioned. Of course she did not mean that every one of them should be included in one picnic meal. Far from it.

When you pack the food, there are several items to be observed. Don't put moist foods, deviled eggs for instance, with sandwiches or cake. Don't pack foods tightly. And don't take too much food. "Count noses," before you go, and see that there's plenty for everybody, but not so much that part of it must be brought home again, or thrown away. You know yourself that there's nothing more depressing than picnic food, served at home the next day.

Things to be avoided in a picnic meal are too many dry foods, too many starchy foods, and foods which do not blend. Also, avoid duplication of the same kind of food. If one person is in charge of the meal, and can tell the others what to bring, so much the better, No use having two or three kinds of cake, when one is enough.

I asked my friend to give me a good picnic menu; here's her suggestion -- an appetizer, such as pickles; something solid, cold tongue or ham sandwiches, and potato chips; something moist, lettuce and tomato salad; something sweet, cookies; fruit, watermelon this time; and a hot or cold drink -- coffee or lemonade, take your choice. If you want to make this meal even simpler, slip crisp leaves of lettuce right into the meat sandwiches, just before they are served, and serve the tomatoes whole, with salt. A cold juicy tomato is as refreshing as a drink.

Now let me see -- there was something special on my mind today. Somebody wanted something -- Oh yes, somebody wanted a recipe for Mexican Salad, and as the Little Bear said when he found Goldilocks, "here she is":

Six ingredients, for Mexican Salad:

2 large green peppers	4 slices bacon,
1 onion, medium, cut fine	1/4 cup vinegar, and
3 large firm tomatoes	1/4 teaspoon chili powder

Skin the tomatoes. Remove the seeds from the peppers. Cut the tomatoes and peppers into small uniform pieces. Mix with the onion. Fry the bacon until crisp, and remove from the pan. Add the vinegar and chili powder, to the bacon fat. Let this mixture come to the boiling point, and then pour over the vegetables. When chilled, add the bacon, which has been broken into small pieces, and serve on crisp lettuce leaves, with the sauce as a dressing.

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